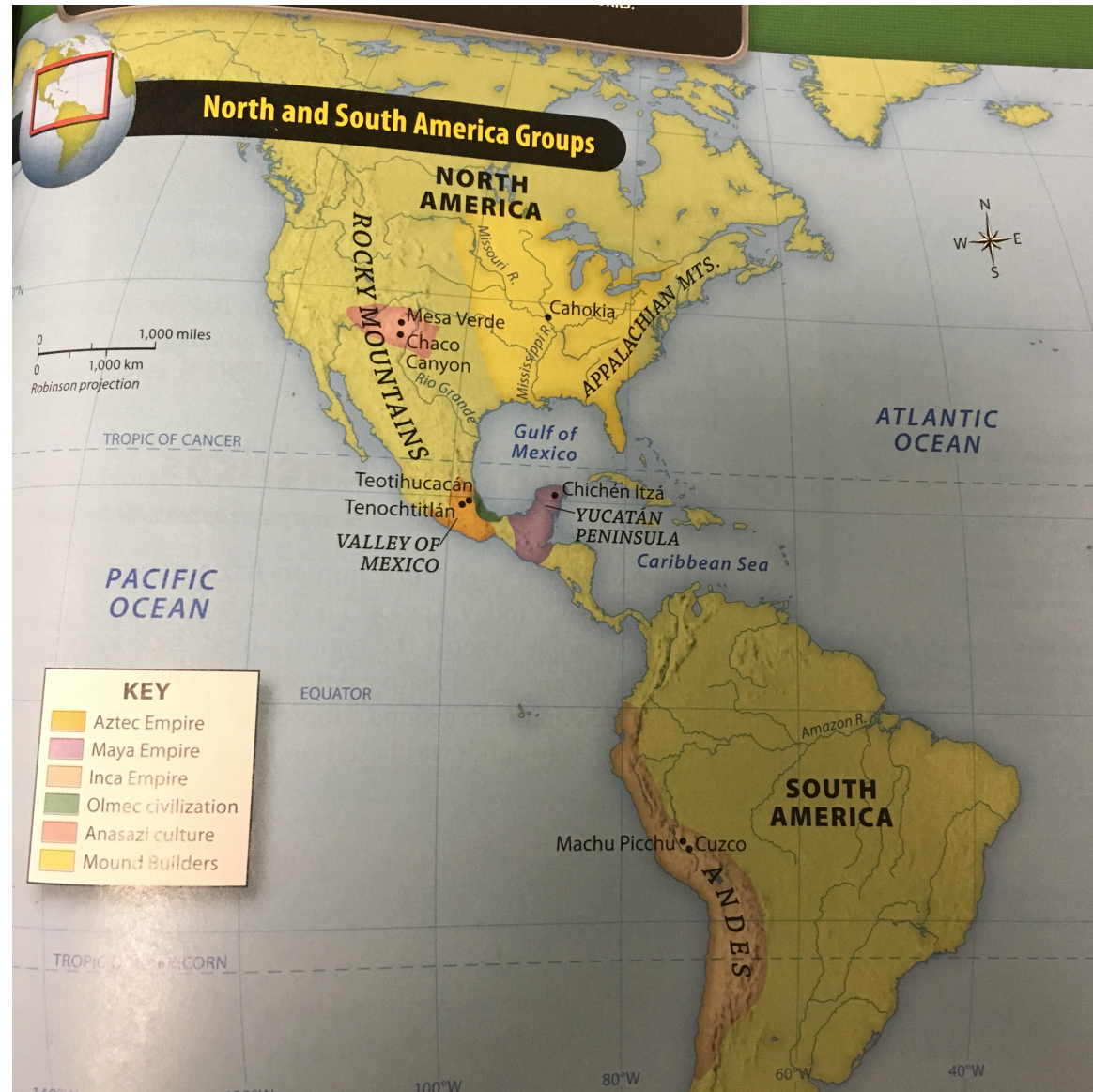


## Bell Work (pg 141 in WHIN)

Use the map to answer the following question:

- Is Cahokia located north or south of the Amazon River?
- How did the location of Tenochtitlan affect Aztec trade?
- Use cardinal directions to locate Cuzco compared to Cahokia.
- How does location affect the strength of an empire?

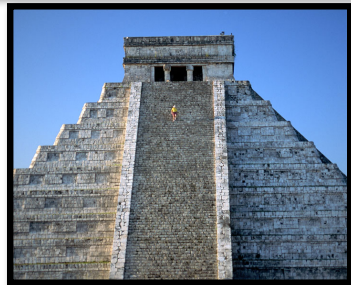
Next, glue Monday's article as a FLAP on pg 141 and the graphic organizer FLAT on pg 142



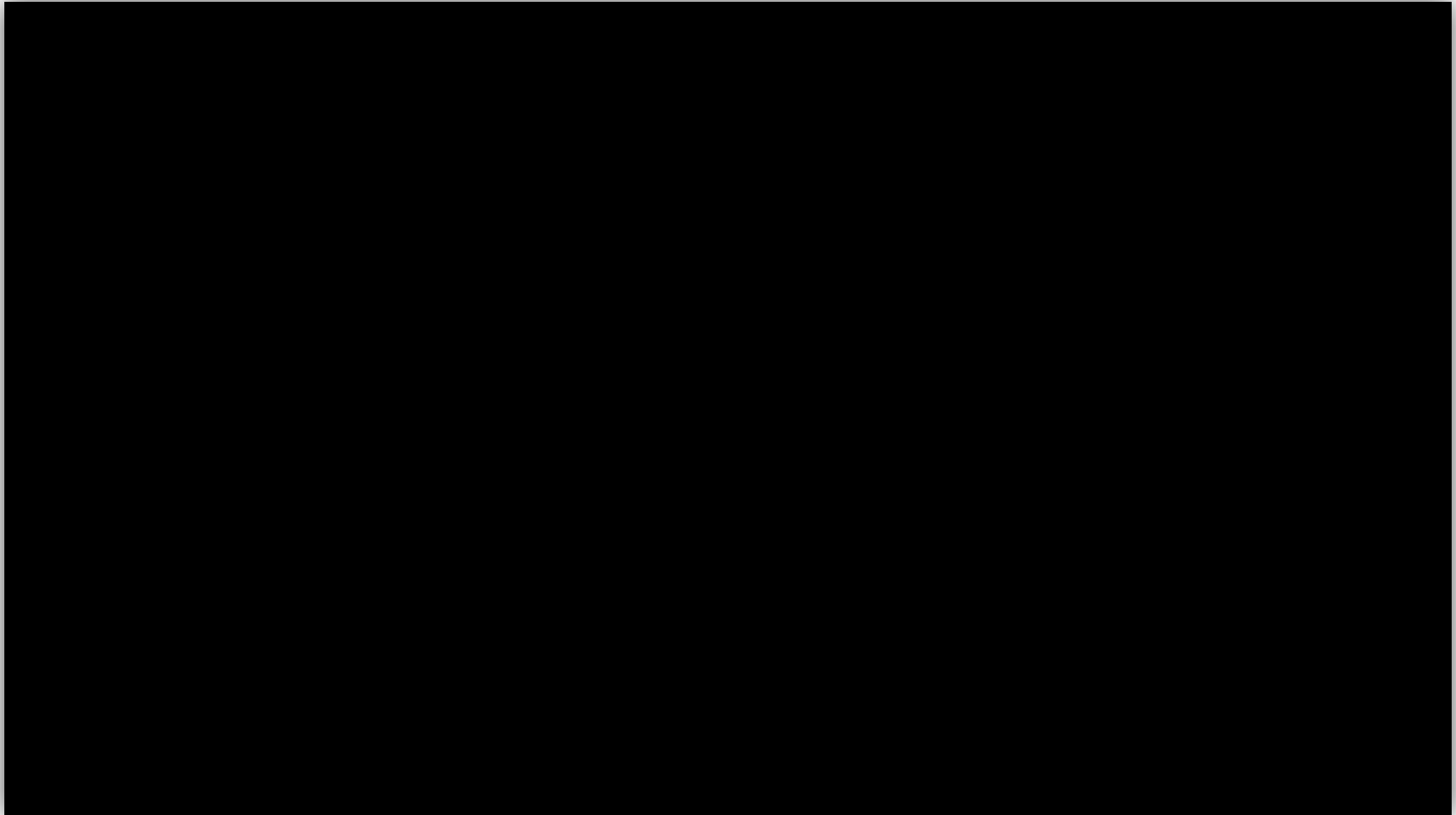
# SOCIETY & POLITICS OF THE MAYANS

## LESSON MAIN IDEAS:

- Social Class System
- Kings & City-States



**WHAT IMPACT DID KINGS HAVE ON THE DAILY LIVES OF MAYANS?  
HOW DID THE MAYANS LIVE?**



Like other Mesoamerican civilizations, because the Maya produced a food surplus, some people could focus on tasks other than farming. Some became craftspeople. Others became priests or teachers. This division of labor (known as **labor specialization**) resulted in the development of a **class system**.

### **SURPLUS FOOD**

- Farming methods improve
- Grow enough food to save for later

### **INCREASE IN POPULATION**

- More food means healthier people
- Population increases because fewer people die at an early age

### **LABOR SPECIALIZATION**

- Have more time to spend on activities other than farming & gathering food
- Focus attention on creating & producing things

### **ADVANCEMENT OF CIVILIZATION**

- New technology is invented
- Have goods to trade & build wealth

# WHAT WERE THE FOUR MAIN SOCIAL CLASSES OF THE MAYANS?

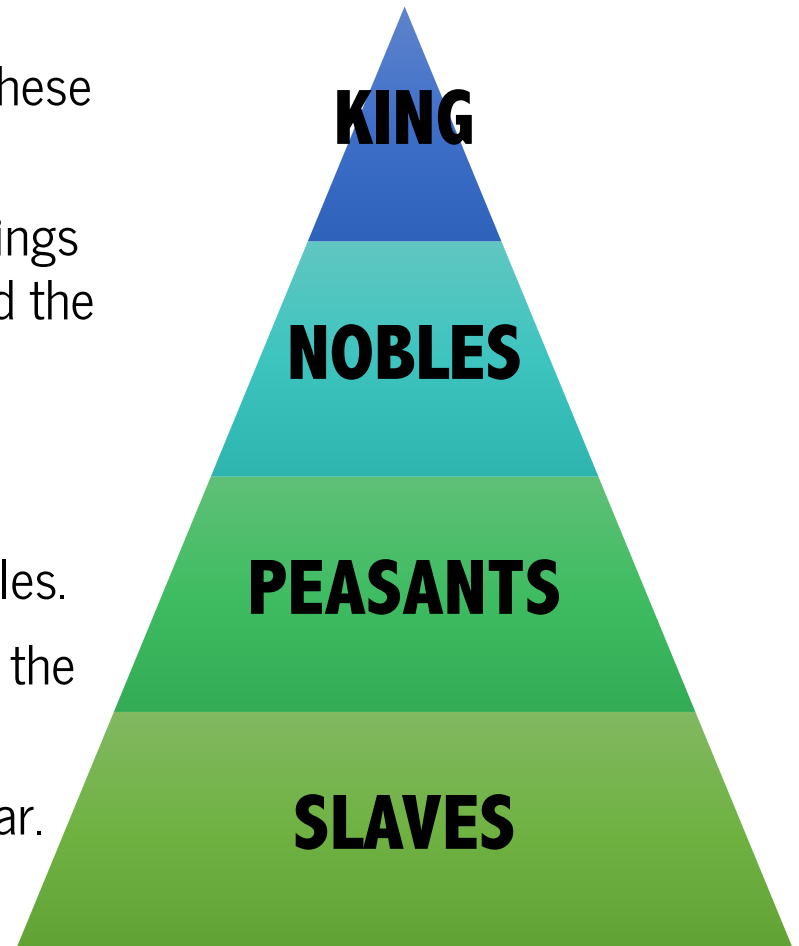
Mayan society consisted of four broad social classes. These were the ruling class, the nobility, peasants, and slaves.

The ruling class consisted of **kings and their families**. Kings governed each of the Mayan cities. They also performed the religious duties of priests.

The **nobility** probably included scholars, architects, and merchants. They were educated and wealthy. Many historians believe that Mayan warriors were mostly nobles.

**Peasants** included farmers and laborers. They made up the vast majority of the population.

**Slaves** were mostly criminals and people captured in war. Orphaned children sometimes became slaves.





## Pacal II of Palenque (603-683)

Pacal II was one of the great Mayan kings. He took the throne of the city of Palenque at the age of 12 and ruled for nearly 70 years. During his reign, Palenque reached the height of its power.

Interestingly, Pacal almost did not become king. Pacal's mother, Lady Zac-Zuk, ruled Palenque as queen. However, according to Mayan tradition, only the son of a king could become king. But Pacal declared that his mother was the living image of the First Mother, a goddess who created the Maya. In other words, Pacal claimed that he was the son of a goddess. With this declaration, Pacal secured his right to the throne.

**WATCH [THIS VIDEO](#) FROM THE HISTORY CHANNEL FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PACAL II.**

Based on the story of Pacal II and the video about his pyramid, how do you know that kings were an important part of Mayan society?

**Think  
About It.**



# MAYAN KINGS

Ancient Mayan government was formed on the basis that rulers were thought to have been god-like. A king governed each Mayan city and its surrounding area. Each city was independent of the other Mayan cities.

Sometimes kings declared war on neighboring city-states. They did this to gain political or economic advantage. For example, if a king won a war, he would gain control of important trade routes or fields of crops. A victory might also win him tribute (payment to keep the peace) from other cities.





# NOW WHAT?

THINKING, COLLABORATING, EXPLORING AND CREATING

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## PLAN A:

In this lesson, we learned about the way society was structured in the Mayan civilization. Draw your own illustration of the social class system of the Mayans.



# NOW WHAT?

THINKING, COLLABORATING, EXPLORING AND CREATING

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## PLAN B:

We learned about the power that kings had in the Mayan civilization and clues the Mayans left behind to show this.

Think about leaders in our country today. How would someone unfamiliar with America know that these people are important to us? Write a paragraph explaining your thoughts.

